

Agricultural Commission Meeting Minutes

October 12th, 2010
Town Hall

Members Present: John Thibbits, Jaime Wagner (Tidlund), Ruth Hazzard, Sally Fitz, Touria Eaton, Wm Levine, Pat Wagner

Members Absent: Jeremy Barker-Plotkin

Non-Members Present: Diana Stein (Select Board), David Ziomek (Staff Liaison), David Webber (Planning Board liaison), and Andrew Tiner (Swartz Farm)

Minutes: The minutes from July, August, and September were reviewed and unanimously approved with some changes.

Hawkers and Peddlers of Ag products: A letter drafted by Wm for town council, to clarify the rules for hawkers and peddlers on town property was reviewed and approved by the commission. Ruth will sign the letter and forward it to town council, for their review.

Subcommittee Reports:

Winter Farmers Market: a spreadsheet was passed out of vendors who want to sell at the market and also the goods they intend to sell. There has been a contract made between the market and the middle school for use of that building. Insurance has been obtained.

A site visit has been made to go over the logistics; vendors are going to bring their own tables. They are looking for a market manager, someone to promote the market via social media and other avenues. This person also needs to be the contact person for the market and any issues that arise; they also need to oversee the market onsite. The market will run 12/4/2010 through 4/2010 on Saturdays from 10-2. Diana will mention the market starting at the Select Board meeting. The market committee is working to get some funding from USDA to help keep the cost down for vendors. Who is responsible for this market and what is the Ag coms role? The market is independently run by its vendors, the Ag Coms' role is to facilitate its process of development but not run it. The subcommittee met with Michael Doctor and Joe Swartz to address concerns about how this new winter market can run smoothly with the North Amherst Farmers Market, which will continue through winter.

Education: The middle school is doing a cleanup of the grounds and the principal is eager to extend the walls of the school outside, Sally is going to volunteer at the cleanup on 10/23. Touria is still keeping up on what is happening with the Hawthorne property in hopes of being able to use a small piece of this land.

Preservation: This subcommittee has not met again, Pat has received some information from David on town owned land, and she is planning on going to the Conservation meeting Wed. night and involve herself in the land use discussion.

Communication/Newsletter: John and Jaime presented their mock newsletter; they are hoping to have the first issue out the beginning of Nov. Copies will also be left at some local Ag related businesses, They hope to get it to the school principals as well as other local Ag coms.

Warrant Articles:

Article 12

There was a motion to eliminate from paragraph 2 the words "by people we trust" and "therefore", this was unanimously approved.

There was a discussion about changing the wording of an article; at this stage in the process; changes in wording can be made as long as there are no changes to the body or context of an article.

Article 9

Ruth spoke with the chair of the Board of Health about whether they want to regulate chicken issues, it was decided that keeping of small flocks of chickens is not a public health issue, and that the animal control officer will respond to issues if need be. The zoning subcommittee extended the meeting on this issue until next week. The planning board has not made a

Approved at the November 9, 2010 Agricultural Commission meeting.

recommendation on this issue yet; Ruth suggests that as a body we recommend this be referred back to the planning board. There was a motion to refer it back to the planning board, which was unanimously approved. 7 yays, 0 nays.

Article 10

There was a question raised on where the \$1000.00 limit came from, and it was found that it came from a memo from the MDAR. This article basically is making the town comply with the state rules and regulations. There was a motion to accept this article as written voted 6 yays, 0 nays (Wm had left the meeting at this point)

Andrew Tiner asked about the application Joe Swartz of Swartz Farm submitted to be a member of the Ag Com, Diana was going to check on that.

Meeting adjourned 9:33 PM

Respectfully submitted

Jaime Wagner